Human Rights

THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Fact Sheet No. 9 *(Rev.1)*

50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948-1998

An objective of the Decade is the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous people and their empowerment to make choices which enable them to retain their cultural identity while participating in political, economic and social life, with full respect for their cultural values, languages, traditions and forms of social organization.

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE INTERNATIONAL DECADE OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE (1995-2004)*

(para. 4)

*General Assembly resolution 50/157 of 21 December 1995, annex.

Introduction

Indigenous peoples inhabit large areas of the earth's surface. Spread across the world from the Arctic to the South Pacific, they number, at a rough estimate, some 300 million. Indigenous or aboriginal peoples are so-called because they were living on their lands before settlers came from elsewhere; they are the descendants—according to one definition—of those who inhabited a country or a geographical region at the time when people of different cultures or ethnic origins arrived, the new arrivals later becoming dominant through conquest, occupation, settlement or other means.

Among many indigenous peoples are the Indians of the Americas (for example, the Mayas of Guatemala or the Aymaras of Bolivia), the Inuit and Aleutians of the circumpolar region, the Saami of northern Europe, the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders of Australia, and the Maori of New Zealand. These and most other indigenous peoples have retained social, cultural, economic and political characteristics which are clearly distinct from those of the other segments of the national populations.

Throughout human history, whenever dominant neighbouring peoples have expanded their territories or settlers from far away have acquired new lands by force, the cultures and livelihoods—even the existence—of indigenous peoples have been endangered. The threats to indigenous peoples' cultures and lands, to their status and other legal rights as distinct groups and as citizens, do not always take the same forms as in previous times. Although some groups have been relatively successful, in most parts of the world indigenous peoples are actively seeking recognition of their identities and ways of life.

As of March 1997, 15 organizations of indigenous peoples have consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Consultative status entitles them to attend and contribute to a wide range of international and intergovernmental conferences. These organizations are: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, *Asociación Kunas Unidos por Nabguana*, Four Directions Council, Grand Council of the Crees (of Quebec), Indian Council of South America, Indian Law Resource Centre, Indigenous World

Association, International Indian Treaty Council, International Organization of Indigenous Resource Development, Inuit Circumpolar Conference, National Aboriginal and Islander Legal Services Secretariat, National Indian Youth Council, Saami Council, Sejekto Cultural Association of Costa Rica, and World Council of Indigenous Peoples. In addition, hundreds of representatives of other indigenous peoples and their organizations participate in United Nations meetings, in particular those of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations. Non-governmental organizations with general human rights interests actively contribute to work in the field of indigenous peoples' rights, in addition to supporting indigenous peoples' causes.

In spite of cultural and ethnic diversity, there are often striking similarities between the problems, grievances and interests of the various indigenous peoples and therefore in their presentations to international forums. Participation of indigenous communities and organizations in United Nations meetings has served to highlight these similarities.

It has often been the case—particularly since the emergence of new nations in the wave of decolonization which followed the Second World War—that indigenous peoples insist on retaining their separate identity and cultural heritage. It is now generally admitted that policies of assimilation and integration aimed at bringing these groups fully into the mainstream of majority populations are often counter-productive.

Non-governmental activity, on the one hand, and intergovernmental initiatives, on the other, have had a mutually reinforcing effect. The first international conference of non-governmental organizations on indigenous issues was held in Geneva in 1977. This was followed by another non-governmental conference on indigenous peoples and the land, also in Geneva, in 1981. These meetings, and a special United Nations study then nearing completion, influenced developments which led to the establishment in 1982 of the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations.

In the United Nations and the International Labour Organisation, it is recognized that the establishment and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples are an essential part of human rights and a legitimate concern of the international community. The two organizations are active in the setting and implementing of standards designed to ensure respect for existing rights of indigenous peoples and the adoption of additional rights. This Fact Sheet deals briefly with the present work of the United Nations, its evolution, and plans for future

action to promote and safeguard the rights of indigenous peoples everywhere.

Study of discrimination against indigenous peoples

In the 1920s, American Indians approached the League of Nations. Their visit to Geneva attracted considerable attention, but there were no tangible results. In the early years of the United Nations, indigenous peoples' representatives made sporadic appeals to the world Organization. There was no specific reaction. A Bolivian Government initiative in the United Nations in 1948 to create a subcommission to study the social problems of aboriginal populations also came to nothing.

Since its establishment, the United Nations has, nevertheless, as part of its overall human rights work, addressed some situations which affect indigenous peoples. The concerns of indigenous peoples find their place in a number of instruments and studies prepared over the years, and in the activities of human rights organs dealing, for example, with minorities, slavery, servitude and forced labour.

A turning-point came in 1970, when the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities recommended that a comprehensive study be made of the problem of discrimination against indigenous populations. In 1971, Mr. José R. Martínez Cobo (Ecuador) was appointed Special Rapporteur for the study, which was to suggest national and international measures for eliminating such discrimination. His final report[1] was submitted to the Sub-Commission during the years 1981-1984.

The Special Rapporteur addressed a wide range of human rights issues. They included a definition of indigenous peoples, the role of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, the elimination of discrimination, and basic human rights principles, as well as special areas of action in fields such as health, housing, education, lan-

[1] "Study of the problem of discrimination against indigenous populations", issued in consolidated form in five volumes as document E/CN.4/Sub.2/1986/7 and Add.1-4. Volume V, *Conclusions, Proposals and Recommendations*, was issued as a separate publication (Sales No. E.86.XIV.3).

guage, culture, social and legal institutions, employment, land, political rights, religious rights and practices, and equality in the administration of justice. His conclusions, proposals and recommendations are an important milestone in United Nations consideration of the human rights problems facing indigenous peoples; many are still under consideration and others have been incorporated in resolutions of the Sub-Commission.

Working Group on Indigenous Populations

The study by Mr. Martínez Cobo, the interest generated in the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, and the support of non-governmental organizations led in 1982 to the creation by the Economic and Social Council of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations. The Working Group is a subsidiary organ of the Sub-Commission. Its five members[2]—one from each geopolitical region of the world—are independent experts and are members of the Sub-Commission.

The Working Group meets for one week immediately before the annual session of the Sub-Commission in Geneva. The Group has met every year since 1982 except in 1986. That year, a workshop on indigenous rights was sponsored by the Anti-Slavery Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, and was chaired by the current Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Working Group, Ms. Erica-Irene A. Daes.

The Working Group is open to representatives of all indigenous peoples and their communities and organizations. The openness of the Group's sessions to all interested parties and the constructive dialogue developed between all concerned have strengthened the Group's position as a focal point of international action on behalf of indigenous peoples' causes. Several indigenous peoples' organizations arrange preparatory meetings before the Working Group's sessions to formulate common initiatives and positions.

[2] As of July 1996, the members of the Working Group are: Mr. Miguel Alfonso Martínez (Cuba), Mr. Volodymyr Boutkevitch (Ukraine), Ms. Erica-Irene A. Daes (Chairperson-Rapporteur) (Greece), Mr. El-Hadji Guissé (Senegal) and Mr. Ribot Hatano (Japan).

The interest generated by the activities of the Working Group and in the subject of indigenous peoples' rights in general is indicated by the number of people who take part. Some 700 persons regularly attend the sessions. They include observers for Governments and indigenous peoples' and non-governmental organizations, as well as scholars and academics. The Working Group has become one of the largest United Nations forums in the field of human rights.

Apart from facilitating and encouraging dialogue between Governments and indigenous peoples, the Working Group has two formal tasks:

> To review national developments pertaining to the promotion and protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples; and
>
> To develop international standards concerning the rights of indigenous peoples, taking account of both the similarities and the differences in their situations and aspirations throughout the world.

In reviewing national developments, the Working Group receives and analyses written information submitted by Governments, specialized agencies and other organs of the United Nations, other international and regional intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental bodies and the indigenous peoples themselves.

The Chairperson-Rapporteur visits countries to gain first-hand information, as well as to provide information on United Nations activities in the field of indigenous peoples' rights and to identify issues which need to be taken up in standard-setting.

The Working Group's mandate does not authorize it to examine specific complaints of alleged violations of human rights with the purpose of making recommendations or taking decisions on such cases; other United Nations complaints channels are available for that purpose.[3]

Standard-setting

The Working Group on Indigenous Populations has put special emphasis on the second part of its mandate: the development of international standards concerning the rights of indigenous peoples.

[3] See *Fact Sheet No. 7, Communications Procedures.*

In 1985, the Working Group began preparing a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, taking into account the comments and suggestions of participants in its sessions, particularly representatives of indigenous peoples and Governments. At its eleventh session, in July 1993, the Working Group agreed on a final text for the draft declaration and submitted it to the Sub-Commission.

By its resolution 1994/45 of 26 August 1994, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities adopted the draft declaration and submitted it to the Commission on Human Rights for consideration.[4]

The draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples represents one of the most important developments in the promotion and protection of the basic rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples. The draft declaration consists of 19 preambular paragraphs and 45 articles and covers rights and freedoms including the preservation and development of ethnic and cultural characteristics and distinct identities; protection against genocide and ethnocide; rights related to religions, languages and educational institutions; ownership, possession or use of indigenous lands and natural resources; protection of cultural and intellectual property; maintenance of traditional economic structures and ways of life, including hunting, fishing, herding, gathering, timber-sawing and cultivation; environmental protection; participation in the political, economic and social life of the States concerned, in particular in matters which may affect indigenous people's lives and destinies; self-determination; self-government or autonomy in matters relating to indigenous peoples' internal and local affairs; traditional contacts and cooperation across State boundaries; and the honouring of treaties and agreements concluded with indigenous peoples.

The draft declaration also foresees mutually acceptable and fair procedures for resolving conflicts or disputes between indigenous peoples and States, involving means such as negotiations, mediation, arbitration, national courts, and international and regional human rights review and complaints mechanisms.

The draft declaration further provides that the rights mentioned in it constitute the minimum standards for the survival and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world.

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[4] For the text of the draft declaration, see Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities resolution 1994/45, annex.

Working group on the draft declaration

By its resolution 1995/32 of 3 March 1995, the Commission on Human Rights established an open-ended inter-sessional working group to consider the text submitted by the Sub-Commission and elaborate a draft declaration for consideration and adoption by the General Assembly within the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (1995-2004).[5] The General Assembly has affirmed that the adoption of a declaration is a major objective of the Decade.[6]

In the annex to its resolution 1995/32, the Commission on Human Rights established procedures for participation in the work of the working group on the draft declaration by organizations of indigenous people not having consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (see annex II below). Such organizations are invited to send their applications to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights/Centre for Human Rights, which asks for comments from the States concerned. The applications and the comments of the relevant Governments are considered by the Council's Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations. As of March 1997, 99 organizations of indigenous people had been approved by the Committee.

Since its establishment, the working group on the draft declaration has held two sessions, both at the United Nations Office at Geneva. At its first session, in November-December 1995, the group considered the draft declaration adopted by the Sub-Commission and held a general debate on the text section by section in order to identify where there was general consensus and which articles would require greater deliberation (see E/CN.4/1996/84). At the second session, in October-November 1996, articles dealing with similar themes or having some other relationship with each other were reclustered for the purposes of discussion and in order to hear proposals (see E/CN.4/1997/102). No changes have yet been made to the draft declaration adopted by the Sub-Commission, which remains the basis for the work of the inter-sessional working group.

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[5] Proclaimed by the General Assembly by its resolution 48/163 of 21 December 1993.

[6] See General Assembly resolution 50/157 of 21 December 1995, para. 4.

Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations

In 1985, the General Assembly established the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations. The Fund provides financial assistance to representatives of indigenous communities and organizations to enable them to attend sessions of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations. The Working Group's sessions in Geneva bring together people from all parts of the world. Through the Fund, the United Nations can make it easier for representatives of indigenous communities—many of whom come from distant regions—to take part.

The Fund is administered by the United Nations Secretary-General with the advice of a five-member Board of Trustees,[7] which meets annually to review applications for assistance. The Fund relies on contributions from Governments, non-governmental organizations and other public and private entities, and provides travel grants to about 40 representatives of indigenous peoples every year.

The Board of Trustees' questionnaire, which applicants for assistance from the Fund must complete, is reproduced in annex I below.

In December 1995, the General Assembly extended the scope of the Voluntary Fund for the purpose of also providing financial assistance to representatives of indigenous peoples' organizations authorized by the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations to participate in the work of the Commission on Human Rights working group on the draft declaration.

The number of requests for assistance far exceeds the resources available. The Board of Trustees, the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and the Commission on Human Rights have all appealed for contributions to the Fund. All contributions should be addressed to: Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations, High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights, Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland. Indigenous peoples requesting financial assistance should write to the same address before 15 March each year.

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[7] As of March 1997, the members of the Board of Trustees are: Mr. Michael Dodson (Australia), Mr. Ole Ntimama (Kenya), Ms. Nina Pacari Vega (Ecuador), Ms. Tove Soyndahl Petersen (Denmark) and Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz (Philippines).

Study on treaties and agreements with indigenous peoples

The relations between indigenous peoples and the Governments of the countries in which they live in many cases have a legal foundation in treaties, agreements and other arrangements. Some of the documents date back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The making of such agreements has continued in many countries.

Some treaties stand the test of time, providing a basis for peoples with different backgrounds and cultures to live in harmony. Others have been disputed, either because they are thought of as unfairly negotiated, or because the treaty rights have been breached and obligations not fulfilled.

Many of the treaties carry a great symbolic meaning to indigenous peoples. They are seen as providing recognition of indigenous self-determination, and a guarantee of the collective rights of the peoples concerned. An agreement which has the character of a solemn pledge by one people to another, when fully honoured by both parties, breeds mutual trust and respect and has a potentially vital role in promoting and protecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples.

For all these reasons, the Economic and Social Council in 1989 authorized the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities to appoint Mr. Miguel Alfonso Martínez, a member of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, as Special Rapporteur with the task of preparing a study on the potential utility of treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements between States and indigenous populations. While the study will take into account the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, the Special Rapporteur has been asked to give particular attention to universal human rights standards which now exist or are emerging, and to suggest ways of achieving the maximum possible promotion and protection of indigenous peoples' treaty rights in domestic as well as in international law.

The United Nations has asked States and indigenous peoples to transmit all information relevant to these treaty issues to the Special Rapporteur. He is studying thousands of treaties and agreements already in existence and the work which went into their preparation. He is also consulting constitutional and legislative acts of States and

international and national judicial decisions, as well as other pertinent information.

The Special Rapporteur submitted a preliminary report to the Sub-Commission in 1992, and second and third progress reports in 1994 and 1996, respectively. The final report is due to be submitted to the Sub-Commission in 1997.

Study on protection of the heritage of indigenous peoples

Exploration and colonization beginning in the fifteenth century not only led to rapid appropriation of indigenous peoples' lands and natural resources, but also despoiled their sciences, ideas, arts and cultures.

Today, interest in indigenous peoples' knowledge and cultures is stronger than ever and the exploitation of those cultures continues. Tourism in areas occupied by indigenous people and the commercialization of indigenous art are growing. Indigenous medicinal knowledge and expertise in agricultural biodiversity and environmental management are used, but the profits are rarely shared with indigenous peoples themselves. Many indigenous peoples are also concerned about skeletal remains of their ancestors and sacred objects being held by museums and are exploring ways for their restitution.

For indigenous peoples all over the world the protection of their cultural and intellectual property has taken on growing importance and urgency. They cannot exercise their fundamental human rights as distinct nations, societies and peoples without the ability to control the knowledge they have inherited from their ancestors.

Accordingly, in 1992, the Economic and Social Council endorsed the appointment of Ms. Erica-Irene A. Daes, Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, as Special Rapporteur of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities to prepare a study on measures which should be taken by the international community to strengthen respect for the cultural and intellectual property of indigenous peoples.

The completed study was submitted to the Sub-Commission in August 1993 (see E/CN.4/Sub.2/1993/28). It may be seen as a first formal step in responding to the concerns expressed by indigenous

peoples and as a basis for appropriate standard-setting to provide them with some immediate relief from the widespread and growing threats to the integrity of their cultural, spiritual, artistic, religious and scientific traditions.

The study was followed up with a request to the Special Rapporteur to draft basic principles and guidelines for protecting the heritage of indigenous peoples and for promoting a wider dialogue between indigenous peoples and the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), international financial institutions, and scientific and professional associations in this field. The draft principles and guidelines were submitted to the Sub-Commission in 1994 and 1995 and a supplementary report in 1996.

Seminars on indigenous peoples' rights

An invited group of governmental and indigenous peoples' experts discussed the effects of racism and racial discrimination on the social and economic relations between indigenous peoples and States at a United Nations seminar in Geneva in January 1989.

Among the conclusions and recommendations of the seminar were the findings that indigenous peoples had been, and still were, the victims of racism and racial discrimination; that relations between States and indigenous peoples should be based on free and informed consent and cooperation, not merely consultation and participation; and that indigenous peoples should be recognized as proper subjects of international law with their own collective rights.

The seminar was chaired by an expert nominated by the Government of Senegal, Mr. Ndary Toure. An indigenous peoples' expert, Mr. Ted Moses of the Grand Council of the Crees (of Quebec), served as Rapporteur.

In September 1991, a group of experts met in Nuuk, Greenland, to review the experience of countries in the operation of schemes of internal self-government for indigenous peoples. Nominated by both Member States of the United Nations and indigenous peoples' organizations, the experts considered different examples of self-government arrangements and made a series of recommendations.

The experts recognized, for example, that indigenous peoples are historically self-governing, with their own languages and cultures, laws and traditions, and that self-determination is a precondition for freedom, justice and peace, both within States and in the international community. A manual containing various examples of indigenous peoples' self-government and self-management arrangements has been prepared by the Centre for Human Rights.

The seminar in Nuuk is considered to have made an important contribution to the discussion on self-government for indigenous peoples. It was chaired by the former Premier of Greenland, Mr. Jonathan Motzfeldt. Ms. Maria Lorenza Dalupan from the Philippines served as Rapporteur.

The role of indigenous peoples in the practice of sustainable development was the focus of attention when representatives of Governments and indigenous groups, as well as independent experts on indigenous peoples, gathered in Santiago, Chile, in May 1992 for a technical conference held as part of the preparations for the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro.

This United Nations Technical Conference on practical experience in the realization of sustainable and environmentally sound self-development by indigenous peoples developed a set of working principles which recognized the need for indigenous peoples to exercise greater jurisdiction over their own affairs, as well as the right to determine their own development, control their own institutions and use their resources as they see fit.

Mr. José Bengoa from Chile chaired the meeting and Mr. Ingmar Egede, a representative of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, served as Rapporteur.

At the invitation of the Government of Canada, the Expert Seminar on Practical Experiences Regarding Indigenous Land Rights and Claims was held at Whitehorse, Canada, in March 1996. The seminar was part of the programme of activities for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. Mr. David Keenan, of the Yukon Council of First Nations, chaired the seminar and Mr. José Aylwin Oyarzun, of the Government of Chile, served as Rapporteur.

The seminar adopted final conclusions and recommendations on indigenous land rights and claims. It emphasized, *inter alia*, that the promotion and protection of rights over lands and resources of indigenous peoples are vital for the peoples' development and cultural survival. Furthermore, the importance of participation by indigenous

peoples in decision-making processes was underlined. The seminar concluded that political will in the form of a genuine commitment on the part of Governments to partnership in decision-making is essential to the success of co-management regimes and to the avoidance of adversarial relations between parties to such regimes. It also stated that the implementation of sustainable development should take fully into account indigenous peoples' values, knowledge and technologies in order to ensure resources for future generations.

Indigenous peoples' rights: the wider perspective

The Working Group on Indigenous Populations is the centre of indigenous rights activity in the United Nations. The focus shifts to the parent bodies, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and the Commission on Human Rights, when the Working Group's reports are being reviewed and discussed. Many of the indigenous rights initiatives undertaken by the parent bodies have grown out of recommendations contained in reports of the Working Group.

The Sub-Commission reviews the annual reports of the Working Group and acts on its recommendations under an agenda item entitled "Discrimination against indigenous peoples". (The Sub-Commission abandoned the term "indigenous populations" in favour of "indigenous peoples" in 1988.) The Commission on Human Rights, in turn, considers the Working Group's reports together with the reports of the Sub-Commission. In 1996, the Commission decided to include a new item on its agenda entitled "Indigenous issues". In both parent bodies, the Group's reports command considerable and increasing attention, in the form of debates and resolutions. Indigenous organizations increasingly attend United Nations human rights meetings, in addition to those of the Working Group.

Indigenous peoples are entitled to enjoy all existing human rights. United Nations committees which oversee the implementation of binding agreements—the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes specific provisions relating to indigenous people—consider indigenous issues when examining reports by States

on their performance under these treaties. The bodies concerned are, respectively, the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Indigenous peoples and their organizations increasingly make use of the various communications or complaints procedures available to them. These are, in particular, the so-called "1503" procedure established by the Economic and Social Council to look into gross and consistent patterns of human rights violations, and procedures under the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.[8] Special rapporteurs investigating the human rights situation in specific countries or preparing reports on certain topics, for example religious intolerance, human rights and the environment, and population transfer, have also addressed the concerns of indigenous peoples when asked to do so.

The two World Conferences to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, convened by the United Nations in Geneva in 1978 and 1983, debated aspects of discrimination against indigenous peoples and included appropriate principles and measures in their resolutions and programmes of action. Some of these principles are reflected in the draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples. Seminars organized for the Decades for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, notably in Geneva in 1979 and in Managua in 1981, have covered human rights issues affecting indigenous peoples.

A global consultation in Geneva in October 1988 under the Programme of Action for the Second Decade drew attention to the vulnerability of indigenous peoples to racism and racial discrimination. The participants suggested, *inter alia*, that Governments should adopt legislative, administrative, economic and social measures to eliminate policies and practices which discriminate against indigenous individuals, communities and nations, with the aim of improving their living conditions and achieving harmonious relations between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples. All possible measures, they agreed, should be taken to allow indigenous peoples to maintain and develop their cultures; and Governments should create the conditions and implement legal measures to promote and protect the human rights of, among other beneficiaries, indigenous peoples.

[8] See *Fact Sheet No. 7*, Communications Procedures.

International Year of the World's Indigenous People

The need for a new approach to the issue of indigenous peoples was recognized by the General Assembly when, by its resolution 45/164 of 18 December 1990, it proclaimed 1993 the International Year of the World's Indigenous People. Indigenous peoples had, for many years, been calling for an international year to raise global awareness of their situation. At the opening ceremony in New York, for the first time in the history of the United Nations indigenous peoples' leaders spoke directly from the podium of the General Assembly.

The objective of the Year was to strengthen international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous peoples in such areas as human rights, the environment, development, education and health. The theme for the Year, "Indigenous people—a new partnership", was aimed at the development of a new and equitable relationship between the international community, States and indigenous peoples based on the participation of indigenous people in the planning, implementation and evaluation of projects affecting their living conditions and future.

As part of the programme of activities for the Year, the Secretary-General opened a voluntary fund, which provided assistance to some 40 small-scale, community-based projects of indigenous people. Numerous other activities were funded directly by Governments. The Secretary-General appointed Rigoberta Menchú Tum, winner of the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize, as Goodwill Ambassador for the Year. The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights acted as Coordinator for the Year.

World Conference on Human Rights

In June 1993, the second World Conference on Human Rights was held in Vienna. Many hundreds of indigenous people attended the conference and their representatives addressed the plenary session. In the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action which it adopted,[9] the World Conference recognized the "inherent dignity and the unique

[9] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

contribution of indigenous people to the development and plurality of society'' and reaffirmed ''the commitment of the international community to their economic, social and cultural well-being and their enjoyment of the fruits of sustainable development'' (Part I, para. 20). The conference called upon States to ''take concerted positive steps to ensure respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people, on the basis of equality and non-discrimination, and recognize the value and diversity of their distinct identities, cultures and social organization''. The conference also recommended that an international decade of the world's indigenous people be proclaimed and that consideration be given to the establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous people in the United Nations system.

A permanent forum

Following the recommendation by the World Conference on Human Rights that the General Assembly consider the establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous people in the United Nations system, a workshop was held in June 1995 in Copenhagen. Participants included 21 representatives of Governments, 21 delegates from indigenous peoples and two independent experts. The issues discussed were the scope of a permanent forum, the United Nations body to which the proposed forum would report, the mandate and terms of reference, the activities it might undertake, membership and indigenous participation, the relationship with the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, and financial and secretariat implications. At the request of the General Assembly, a review of existing mechanisms, procedures and programmes for indigenous people in the United Nations system has been prepared by the Secretary-General (A/51/493).

International Decade of the World's Indigenous People

Following a recommendation by the World Conference on Human Rights, the General Assembly, by its resolution 48/163 of 21 December 1993, proclaimed the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (1995-2004). The goal of the Decade is to strengthen international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as human rights, the environment,

development, education and health. The theme of the Decade is "Indigenous people: partnership in action". The programme of activities for the Decade adopted by the General Assembly in December 1995 is reproduced in annex III below.

Voluntary Fund for the International Decade

A special fund—the Voluntary Fund for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People—has been established by the General Assembly for the purpose of financially assisting projects and programmes during the Decade. In April 1996, an advisory group met for the first time to recommend guidelines for the Fund and review projects and programmes. The guidelines agreed on are reproduced in annex IV below.

The advisory group is composed of the members of the Board of Trustees of the Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations, the Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, and a representative of the United Nations Development Programme. Three donor Governments are represented by observers.

The International Day: 9 August

In its resolution 49/214 of 23 December 1994 (para. 8), the General Assembly designated 9 August to be observed as International Day of the World's Indigenous People every year during the International Decade. This occasion will be used by the United Nations to draw attention to indigenous issues and societies. It represents an opportunity for Governments, non-governmental organizations and other interested groups to organize activities which raise awareness about indigenous people and their cultures.

The United Nations system

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) was the first international body to take action on indigenous issues. Since its creation in 1919, ILO has defended the social and economic rights of groups

whose customs, traditions, institutions or language set them apart from other sections of national communities. In 1953, ILO published a study on indigenous peoples and in 1957 adopted Convention No. 107 and Recommendation No. 104 on the Protection and Integration of Indigenous and Tribal Populations. These were the first international legal instruments specifically created to protect the rights of peoples whose ways of life and existence were—then, as now—threatened by dominating cultures.

In June 1989, after four years of preparatory work, the International Labour Conference adopted a revised version of Convention No. 107 (now Convention No. 169), on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples. This new instrument eliminates the paternalistic and assimilationist approaches to indigenous peoples which were current in the 1950s. Convention No. 169 serves as a basis for ILO implementation and technical assistance activities for indigenous peoples. As of July 1996, the following States had ratified ILO Convention No. 169: Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Norway, Paraguay and Peru. (The United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples now in preparation will, as a resolution of the General Assembly, constitute a set of recommendations to Member States; the ILO Convention creates international legal commitments binding on States which formally ratify the text.)

The United Nations and ILO cooperate closely in developing activities to achieve the objectives of Convention No. 169 and of the International Decade.

In recent years, other parts of the United Nations system have been active in promoting the rights of indigenous people. In 1981, for example, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) organized an international seminar on ethnocide and ethnic development in Latin America. At that meeting, ethnocide was defined as the conditions under which an ethnic group is denied the right to enjoy, develop and transmit its own culture and its own language. Since that time, UNESCO has supported numerous projects in the educational and cultural fields relating to indigenous peoples.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held at Rio de Janeiro in June 1992, constitutes an important new development for indigenous people in their relationship with the United Nations. The Conference recognized that indigenous people and their communities have a vital role in environmental management and development because of their knowledge and traditional practices. It was stressed that national and international efforts to implement

environmentally sound and sustainable development should recognize, accommodate, promote and strengthen the role of indigenous people and their communities. Chapter 26 of the programme of action adopted by the Conference (Agenda 21) was devoted to indigenous people. Indigenous peoples met in one of the largest gatherings of its kind at the NGO Forum which coincided with the so-called Earth Summit and adopted their own declaration on the environment and development—the Kari-Oka Declaration. One of the outcomes of the Earth Summit was the signing of the Convention on Biological Diversity, which includes provisions specifically concerning indigenous people.

Subsequent high-level conferences, including the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994), the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995), the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) (Istanbul, 1996), have all made recommendations relating to indigenous people.

The World Bank has also recognized the need to protect indigenous peoples and, in September 1991, adopted Operational Directive 4.20 to set out policies and procedures for projects affecting them. The directive provides policy guidance to ensure that indigenous peoples benefit from development projects and to avoid potentially adverse effects on them.

Mention may also be made of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Pan American Health Organization, which have initiated projects for indigenous peoples. In July 1996, the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, in cooperation with WHO, devoted part of its session to the question of health and indigenous peoples.

Conclusions

Discussions in the Working Group on Indigenous Populations and in other human rights bodies indicate that, despite certain progress made, a great deal remains to be done in order to resolve outstanding issues coming between indigenous peoples' interests and national or private development, between the livelihoods and lifestyles of the peoples concerned and public policies and projects. The positive contribution which indigenous groups can make to environmental protection has already been mentioned.

The land issue remains crucial. National economic development generates pressure on territory still in the hands of indigenous peoples. Barren wastelands or forested hinterlands once thought to have little economic, political or military value have been identified as areas of vital importance. These developments could affect the economies and habitats, and the social, religious and cultural systems of indigenous peoples.

The world community has long acknowledged that the distinct cultures and languages of indigenous peoples form part of the cultural heritage of humankind and deserve protection. Much more important than a means of everyday communication, language is the vehicle of culture and identity. Yet organizations defending indigenous peoples' rights cite cases where educational systems are being used to forge nations with one language, history and culture.

Many Governments have stated that they are aware of the serious problems faced by indigenous peoples living in their territories and of the factors which have placed them among the most vulnerable groups in national societies. In some parts of the world, a permanent dialogue is taking place. In other places, direct negotiations between indigenous peoples and Governments have been instituted and are moving forward, with the aim of improving relations and guaranteeing better protection of indigenous peoples' rights.

Some countries have introduced autonomous institutions as well as other programmes specially designed for indigenous peoples at the local and regional levels. These moves are designed to improve conditions in such areas as health, housing, labour and education, and contribute, as far as possible, to the maintenance of traditional ways of life and culture.

In recent years, several Governments have amended their constitutions and legislation to take into account the multicultural character of national society. Some progress has also been made in returning and guaranteeing collective ownership of indigenous lands.

The involvement of the United Nations in the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples has progressed rapidly. This role will be enhanced by public awareness and understanding of the principal issues involved. The International Decade offers an opportunity to raise public awareness and interest and to develop an international plan of action for the improvement of the living conditions of indigenous peoples.

ANNEXES

ANNEX I

Questionnaire for applications for financial assistance from the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations

1. Give the full name of your indigenous organization or community and describe its institutions, and the type and level of its functions and activities.

2. Identify the indigenous people(s) which your organization or community represents. Give information about the geographical location of the people and relevant demographic data.

3. Indicate whether there is a need for full or partial travel funds and for subsistence allowance while in Geneva. Data about the budget and/or annual expenditures and other aspects of the financial situation of the organization or community concerned and the possibility of it raising funds from other sources, including governmental support, would be appreciated.

4. Give the full name(s) and general identification of the person who will represent your organization or community in the Working Group. It is of particular importance that the address of each proposed recipient, at which he or she may be contacted directly, is provided. You should also include the following information: relevant biographical information, including in particular the position and work or activities of the person(s) concerned on behalf of the community/organization at local, national, regional and international levels; other experience in indigenous peoples' affairs; language(s) spoken, indigenous and non-indigenous; indication of priority if more than one representative; need for interpreter or liaison.

5. Indicate, if possible, the substantive contribution which each representative will be able to make to the items on the agenda of the Working Group, drawing on the experience of his/her people concerning their basic rights and suggestions on how best to make them effective, in particular as they relate to the review of developments pertaining to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms and/or to the evolution of international standards.

6. Indicate, in particular, the intended travel itinerary to and from Geneva, including route, carrier and cost. Applicants should bear in mind that the Board will accord priority to those applicants who indicate that they have made efforts locally to determine the least expensive way of travelling to and from Geneva from the place of departure.

United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations
High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights
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1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland

ANNEX II

Procedures[a] for participation by organizations of indigenous people in the open-ended inter-sessional working group established by the Commission on Human Rights to elaborate a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples

1. The procedures contained in the present annex are adopted solely to authorize the participation of organizations of indigenous people not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council.

2. These procedures are consistent with the procedures set forth in resolution 1296 (XLIV) of 23 May 1968 of the Economic and Social Council and do not constitute a precedent in any other situation. They shall apply only to the Working Group created by Council resolution 1995/32 of 25 July 1995 and they shall remain in effect for the duration of the Working Group.

3. Organizations of indigenous people not in consultative status wishing to participate in the Working Group may apply to the Coordinator of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. Such applications must include the following information on the organization concerned:

(*a*) The name, headquarters or seat, address and contact person for the organization;

(*b*) The aims and purposes of the organization (these should be in conformity with the spirit, purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations);

(*c*) Information on the programmes and activities of the organization and the country or countries in which they are carried out or to which they apply;

[a] Commission on Human Rights resolution 1995/32 of 3 March 1995, annex.

(*d*) A description of the membership of the organization, indicating the total number of members.

4. Upon receipt of applications, the Coordinator of the International Decade should consult with any State concerned pursuant to Article 71 of the Charter of the United Nations and paragraph 9 of resolution 1296 (XLIV) of the Economic and Social Council. The Coordinator should promptly forward all applications and information received to the Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations for its decision.

5. Authorization to participate shall remain valid for the duration of the Working Group subject to the relevant provisions of part VIII of resolution 1296 (XLIV) of the Economic and Social Council.

6. The activities of organizations of indigenous people authorized to participate in the Working Group pursuant to these procedures shall be governed by rules 75 and 76 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

7. Organizations of indigenous people authorized to participate in the Working Group will have the opportunity to address the Working Group, consistent with the relevant provisions of paragraphs 31 and 33 of Council resolution 1296 (XLIV), and are encouraged to organize themselves into constituencies for this purpose.

8. Organizations of indigenous people may make written presentations which, however, will not be issued as official documents.

9. States having indigenous populations should take effective measures to bring the invitation to participate and these procedures to the attention of organizations of indigenous people potentially interested in contributing to and participating in the Working Group.

ANNEX III

Programme of activities for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People[a]

A. OBJECTIVES

1. Taking into account General Assembly resolution 48/163 of 21 December 1993, the main objective of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People is the strengthening of international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as human rights, the environment, development, health, culture and education.

2. The specialized agencies of the United Nations system and other international and national agencies, as well as communities and private enterprises, should devote special attention to development activities of benefit to indigenous communities.

3. A major objective of the Decade is the education of indigenous and non-indigenous societies concerning the situation, cultures, languages, rights and aspirations of indigenous people. In particular, efforts should be made to cooperate with the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education.

4. An objective of the Decade is the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous people and their empowerment to make choices which enable them to retain their cultural identity while participating in political, economic and social life, with full respect for their cultural values, languages, traditions and forms of social organization.

5. An objective of the Decade is to further the implementation of the recommendations pertaining to indigenous people of all high-level international conferences, including the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the World Conference on

[a] General Assembly resolution 50/157 of 21 December 1995, annex.

Human Rights, in particular its recommendation that consideration be given to the establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous people in the United Nations system, the International Conference on Population and Development and the World Summit for Social Development, as well as all future high-level meetings.

6. An objective of the Decade is the adoption of the draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples and the further development of international standards as well as national legislation for the protection and promotion of the human rights of indigenous people, including effective means of monitoring and guaranteeing those rights.

7. The objectives of the Decade should be assessed by quantifiable outcomes that will improve the lives of indigenous people and that can be evaluated halfway through the Decade and at its end.

B. ACTIVITIES TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE MAJOR ACTORS

1. *United Nations observances*

8. A formal observance each year on the International Day of the World's Indigenous People, in New York, Geneva and at other offices of the United Nations.

9. Official observance of the Decade as part of the Fourth World Conference on Women, the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and other international conferences related to the aims and themes of the Decade.

10. Issuance of a special series of stamps by the United Nations Postal Administration highlighting the goals and themes of the Decade.

2. *Activities of the Coordinator and the Centre for Human Rights*

11. Establish, as a matter of urgency, an adequately staffed and resourced indigenous people's unit.

12. Request Governments to second qualified indigenous people, in consultation with interested national indigenous organizations, to assist in the administration of the Decade.

13. Create a fellowship programme, in collaboration with the Advisory Services of the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat and Governments, to assist indigenous people wishing to gain experience in the different branches of the Centre and in other parts of the United Nations system. Such fellowships might be available for indigenous research and other similar activities.

14. Open a roster of indigenous experts in various fields who might be available to assist United Nations agencies, in collaboration with Governments, as appropriate, as partners or consultants.

15. Create an advisory group of persons with relevant knowledge of indigenous issues, acting in their personal capacity, to advise the Coordinator for the Decade and United Nations organizations, at their request. The members of this advisory group could include eminent indigenous persons, governmental representatives, independent experts and officials of the specialized agencies.

16. Consider the need to hold coordination meetings of Governments, organizations of the United Nations system and indigenous and non-governmental organizations, as necessary, to consider, examine and evaluate Decade activities and to develop an integrated, action-oriented strategy to advance the interests of indigenous people. The Economic and Social Council should hold mid-term and end-term reviews of the Decade in accordance with its resolution 1988/63 of 27 July 1988. The Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities should review international activities undertaken during the Decade and receive information from Governments on the implementation of the goals of the Decade in their respective countries.

17. Compile, on the basis of communications of the focal points in the United Nations system, a regular news-sheet containing information about meetings of interest, major or innovatory projects, new sources of funding, policy developments and other news to be widely distributed.

18. Encourage the development of partnership projects in association with Governments to address specific regional or thematic issues bringing together Governments, indigenous people and appropriate United Nations agencies.

19. Establish an information programme linking the Coordinator of the Decade to focal points of the United Nations system, national committees for the Decade and, through appropriate channels, indigenous networks; also develop a database of indigenous organizations

and other relevant information, in cooperation with indigenous people, Governments, academic institutions and other relevant bodies.

20. Organize meetings on relevant themes of concern to indigenous people with indigenous participation.

21. Launch a series of publications on indigenous issues to inform policy makers, opinion-formers, students and other interested people.

22. Develop, in collaboration with Governments, training programmes on human rights for indigenous people, including the preparation of relevant training materials, when possible in indigenous languages.

23. Establish a board of trustees or advisory group, including indigenous people, to assist the Coordinator of the Voluntary Fund for the International Decade.

24. Encourage the development of projects and programmes, in collaboration with Governments and taking into account the views of indigenous people and the appropriate United Nations agencies, for support by the Voluntary Fund for the Decade.

25. Ensure, in coordination with Governments and indigenous organizations, the necessary measures to guarantee financing of the objectives of the Decade.

3. *United Nations public information activities*

26. Produce and disseminate a series of posters on the Decade using designs by indigenous artists.

27. Organize a lecture series at United Nations information centres and campuses linked to the United Nations University, using indigenous speakers.

28. Publish in indigenous languages the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international human rights conventions and, upon its adoption, the United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, considering the use of audiovisual material for this purpose. Consider also the involvement of indigenous experts and their own information networks in disseminating information about the Decade.

29. Prepare, in collaboration with the Centre for Human Rights, information about indigenous people for distribution to the general public.

4. *Operational activities of the United Nations system*

30. Establish focal points for indigenous issues in all appropriate organizations of the United Nations system.

31. Encourage the governing bodies of specialized agencies of the United Nations system to adopt programmes of action for the Decade in their own fields of competence, in close cooperation with indigenous people.

32. Urge Governments to ensure that the programmes and budgets of relevant intergovernmental organizations give priority and devote sufficient resources to furthering the aims of the Decade, and request that regular reports on the action taken be submitted to the governing body or executive council of each organization.

33. Prepare, publish and disseminate a manual containing practical information for indigenous people on the operations and procedures of United Nations agencies.

34. Develop research on the socio-economic conditions of indigenous people, in collaboration with indigenous organizations and other appropriate partners, with a view to publishing regular reports in order to contribute to the solution of problems faced by indigenous people, taking into account paragraph 6.26 of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, held at Cairo from 5 to 13 September 1994.

35. Encourage Governments to establish appropriate mechanisms and practices to ensure the participation of indigenous people in the design and implementation of national and regional programmes of concern to them.

36. Hold regular inter-agency consultations, in collaboration with Governments and indigenous people, to exchange views and develop strategies on the programme of action for the Decade.

37. Hold consultations with Governments to examine, with national committees and development agencies, possibilities of cooperation in the activities of the Decade.

38. Develop training materials for indigenous people on human rights, including the translation of the main international instruments into different indigenous languages, and give them wide distribution. Consider the possibility of using radio programmes to gain access to indigenous communities not having written languages.

39. Prepare a database on national legislation on matters of particular relevance to indigenous people.

40. Hold consultations of all interested parties on the themes of human rights, the environment, development, health, culture and education, with a view to elaborating programmes in these areas.

5. *Activities of regional organizations*

41. Implement existing and develop new regional programmes of action to promote and support the objectives of the Decade.

42. Hold regional meetings on indigenous issues with existing regional organizations with a view to strengthening coordination, taking advantage of the machinery of the United Nations system and promoting the direct and active participation of indigenous people of different regions in collaboration with Governments. The Working Group on Indigenous Populations could consider the possibility of holding its sessions in conjunction with these meetings.

43. Develop training courses and technical assistance programmes for indigenous people in areas such as project design and management, environment, health and education, and promote the exchange of skills and experiences of indigenous people from different regions.

44. Make funds available at the regional level to activities benefiting indigenous people.

45. Encourage regional organizations to draw up regional instruments for the promotion and protection of indigenous people in the framework of their own structures and promote existing regional instruments.

6. *Activities of Member States*

46. Establish national committees for the Decade or similar mechanisms, including indigenous people, all relevant departments and

other interested parties duly convened by Governments, to mobilize public support for the various activities connected with the Decade.

47. Intensify coordination and communication at the national level between relevant ministries, agencies and regional and local authorities by establishing focal points or other mechanisms for coordination and dissemination of information.

48. Use part of the resources of existing programmes and of international assistance for activities of direct benefit to indigenous people and, where possible, provide additional funds for specific activities.

49. Develop, in collaboration with indigenous communities, national plans for the Decade, including main objectives and targets, fixing quantitative outcomes and taking into account the need for resources and possible sources of financing.

50. Provide appropriate resources for indigenous institutions, organizations and communities to develop their own plans and actions according to their own priorities.

51. Adopt measures, in cooperation with indigenous people, to increase knowledge, starting at the elementary-school level and in accordance with the age and development of schoolchildren, concerning the history, traditions, culture and rights of indigenous people, with special emphasis on the education of teachers at all levels, and adopt measures to restore indigenous place-names.

52. Consider ratification and implementation of the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention of the International Labour Organisation (No. 169) and other international and regional instruments, in close consultation with the indigenous organizations of each country.

53. Recognize the existence, identity and rights of indigenous people through constitutional reforms or the adoption of new laws, when appropriate to improve their legal status and guarantee their economic, social, cultural, political and civil rights.

54. Implement chapter 26 of Agenda 21, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, and the relevant provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development, as well as the relevant provisions of future high-level conferences.

7. *Activities of organizations of indigenous people*

55. Establish an information network which can be linked to the Coordinator of the Decade and facilitate communications between the United Nations system, relevant governmental departments and indigenous communities.

56. Indigenous organizations and international indigenous networks should develop information for local communities concerning the goals of the Decade and the activities of the United Nations.

57. Establish and support indigenous schools and university-level institutions and collaborate with the relevant United Nations agencies; participate in the revision of school texts and the contents of programmes of study in order to eliminate discriminatory content and promote the development of indigenous cultures and, where appropriate, indigenous languages and scripts; develop indigenous curricula for schools and research institutions.

58. Create documentation centres, archives and *in situ* museums concerning indigenous people, their cultures, laws, beliefs and values, with material that could be used to inform and educate non-indigenous people on these matters. Indigenous people should participate on a preferential basis in the administration of these centres.

59. Establish and promote networks of indigenous journalists and launch indigenous periodicals at the regional and international levels.

60. Indigenous people may transmit their views on the programmes concerning their priority rights to Governments, the United Nations and the specialized agencies and regional organizations.

8. *Activities of non-governmental organizations and other interested parties, including education establishments, the media and business*

61. Cooperate with indigenous organizations, communities and people in the planning of activities for the Decade.

62. Non-governmental organizations working with indigenous people should involve indigenous people in their activities.

63. Create radio and television centres in indigenous regions, when appropriate and in accordance with national legislation, to pro-

vide information on the problems and proposals of indigenous people and to improve communications between indigenous communities.

64. Promote indigenous cultures, with due respect for intellectual property rights, through the publication of books, the production of compact discs and the organization of various artistic and cultural events which enhance knowledge of and serve to develop indigenous cultures and establish indigenous cultural and documentation centres.

65. Involve different social and cultural groups in the activities planned for the Decade.

ANNEX IV

Voluntary Fund for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People: guidelines agreed on at the first meeting of the advisory group (Geneva, April 1996)

Objectives of the Voluntary Fund:

—to support the programme of activities adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 50/157;

—to provide assistance to projects and programmes advancing the goal of the International Decade: international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as human rights, the environment, development, education, culture and health.

Who may apply:

—indigenous peoples, communities and organizations, non-governmental organizations and academic and other similar institutions; organizations should be non-profit-making;

—national committees for the Decade;

—intergovernmental organizations and Governments with proposals for joint or ''partnership'' projects in cooperation with indigenous peoples.

Main project areas:

—the programme of activities and objectives of the Decade as well as the recommendations of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action as they relate to indigenous people;

—indigenous organizational structures and procedures and their strengthening through education, training and institution- and capacity-building, bearing in mind the need to respect their relevant traditions;

—education and training in human and indigenous rights;

—information about indigenous peoples and the International Decade;

—communications and exchanges between the United Nations system and indigenous peoples and between indigenous peoples;

—fund-raising initiatives in furtherance of the objectives of the Decade.

Criteria for selection:

—projects should be of direct benefit to indigenous people in all parts of the world;

—projects should be prepared by or in full consultation with indigenous people;

—projects will be considered taking into account gender balance;

—particular consideration will be given to projects from underdeveloped areas in different regions;

—projects will be approved in relevant areas, including in particular those relating to the promotion, protection and implementation of human and indigenous rights.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR APPLICANTS TO THE VOLUNTARY FUND

1. Please give the project title.
2. Describe the main objective(s) of the project. Please also indicate how the project relates to one of the six main project areas.
3. Provide a summary of the project, including information about how it will be implemented.
4. What is the executing organization? Please provide information about the organization, including information about membership, past activities and projects, as well as relevant financial details. Provide information about any partner organizations.
5. What are the expected benefits for indigenous people? What is the expected follow-up to the project?
6. What is the duration of the project? Please include information about each phase of the project.
7. What are the total costs of the project, including breakdown of proposed expenditures? What is the contribution requested from the Voluntary Fund? What are the other sources of funding? How will the accounting of the project be managed?
8. How will the project be evaluated? Are the results quantifiable?

PROJECTS SHOULD BE SENT TO THE VOLUNTARY FUND BEFORE 15 MARCH EACH YEAR

APPLICATIONS TO THE VOLUNTARY FUND WILL BE CONSIDERED ANNUALLY IN APRIL

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE VOLUNTARY FUND WILL NOT EXCEED US$ 50,000

Voluntary Fund for the International Decade
of the World's Indigenous People
High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights
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For further information about the United Nations indigenous peoples programme, please contact:

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Telefax: 41 22 917 0212

Updated information about the indigenous peoples programme, including United Nations documents and meetings, can be found on Internet at www.unhchr.ch.

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